



CONTINUOUS EVALUATION PROGRAM FACT SHEET

Background

Although the concept of continuous evaluation (CE) has existed for many years within the personnel security community, the need for CE has become more prominent and poignant in the wake of recent events.

The current background investigation process consists of initial investigations and periodic reinvestigations on individuals determined to have a need for access to classified information. However, a gap exists between investigative cycles in which issues relevant to an individual's continued eligibility for a security clearance may go unreported or unknown. The principles of CE and periodic reinvestigations are fundamentally the same, that is to provide information that can assist in evaluating an individual's continued eligibility for access to classified information during the period of eligibility. The difference is that CE relies on automatic records checks conducted on a continuous basis, while periodic reinvestigations, conducted less frequently, also include other sources of information such as Subject interviews and interviews of coworkers, references, and supervisors.

What is Continuous Evaluation (CE)?

CE is an investigative technique that leverages an automated records check methodology and applies standardized business rules to identify adjudicatively relevant information between investigations to assess cleared individuals' on-going eligibility for access to classified information. CE will supplement the periodic reinvestigation process while also providing potential insight and input to insider threat programs.

What are the authorities for CE?

Pursuant to Executive Order 13467, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), as the Security Executive Agent (SecEA), is responsible for developing uniform and consistent policies and procedures to ensure the effective, efficient, and timely completion of investigations and adjudications relating to determinations by agencies of eligibility for access to classified information or eligibility to hold a sensitive position. Under Executive Order 12968 as amended, the DNI may determine and establish the standards for CE across the Executive Branch. Additionally, because CE is an investigative activity that supports eligibility determinations, the DNI has responsibility for and oversight of CE.

Who is responsible for developing CE?

The Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive (ONCIX) in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) has established a Continuous Evaluation Program (CEP) to develop an enterprise-wide CE tool for Executive Branch use, and to coordinate, align, and integrate Executive Branch departments and agencies' CE activities.

Who is subject to CE?

Any individual affiliated with an Executive Branch department or agency and who has been determined to be eligible for or who currently has access to classified information is subject to CE during the period of eligibility. At this time, the CEP is focusing on implementing a CE solution for the Executive Branch population that has access to the most sensitive information (Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI)).

How will CE be implemented?

A limited CE capability will be developed and implemented in select agencies for a portion of the TS/SCI-cleared population in FY 2015, with the objective of expanding to all executive branch departments and agencies with a TS/SCI population by the end of FY 2016. Executive Branch departments and agencies will align and integrate their agency-specific CE capabilities to the new Federal CE solution.

Is CE going to infringe on anyone's privacy or civil liberties?

Individuals who are eligible for access to classified information sign waivers that permit the government to conduct investigative activities and to collect information relevant to the granting of the security clearance. CE will only collect information relevant to personnel security eligibility determinations for individuals who currently have eligibility for access to classified information and have signed the waiver. CE will only include information that is lawfully available to security officials. Additionally, the CEP is coordinating with legal, civil liberties and privacy experts to ensure that the privacy and civil liberties of individuals are protected in the collection and processing of information for CE.

Will the government be collecting information from social media for CE?

During the initial implementation, CE will generally involve records checks of the same types of information that are currently being checked for personnel security purposes, except on a more frequent basis. However, we are currently researching the use of Publicly Available Electronic Information (PAEI), to include social media and other information available online. As part of the research process, a full legal review of the use of PAEI will be conducted to ensure that the privacy and civil liberties of individuals are protected. Our intent is to have an established standard for handling PAEI in personnel security investigations prior to its inclusion as a CE data source.